

W-6-3

MAR 09 1995

602-~~442-3100~~
789-3605

Ron Christoferson
Project Evaluation Specilaist
Arizona Fish and Game Department
2222 West Greenway Road
Phoenix, AZ 85023

Dear Mr. Christoferson:

Magma Copper Company is proposing to submit an Underground Injection Control Class III Permit Application under 40 CFR Part 144 for the *in-situ* mining Florence Project. In compliance with 40 CFR 144.4 (c), the *Endangered Species Act*, the EPA before issuing a permit authorizing the injection of fluids into underground sources of drinking water (USDW), must ensure that any action authorized by EPA is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of any endangered or threatened species or adversely affect its critical habitat..

The proposed mine site and plant facilities will be located on or around Sections 26, 27, 28, 29, 32, 33, and 34 of Range 9 East, Township 4 South. A map of the proposed mine site is included. The Florence Project is located in the Postone Butte mining district, 2.5 miles northwest of the Town of Florence in Pinal County, Arizona. The reserves are estimated at 1.7 billion pounds of copper oxide. The target zone is 400 to 500 feet thick and lies approximately 400 feet below the land surface. Dilute sulfuric acid will be injected into the oxidized ore body and circulated until the pregnant leach solution (PLS) contains enough copper for processing by the solution extraction/electrowinning process plant (SXEW).

The process of in-situ leach mining utilizes production (injection/recovery) wells which are categorized as discharging facilities. Potential discharges may also occur from several surface facilities involved in the mining process. These other potentially discharging facilities include the PLS storage impoundment, raffinate storage impoundment, and other potential process ponds.

Your office has previously supplied Magma Copper Company with a listing of the Federal endangered and categorical species for the Florence area and an updated list has been requested.

We are requesting that the Fish and Wildlife Service please comment on the potential impact that the Florence Project may have on endangered species. Please inform us of any required document or project description that we can provide to assist your office. If you have any

questions or comments please call Jose Gutierrez of my staff at (415) 744-1829. Thank you very much for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

Original Signed By:

Doris Betuel, Chief
Source Water Protection Section

Enclosure